

Permission to Travel - ITTA "Player Passport" (PP)

Introduction:

The ITTA recognises that the current level of resources available to the Association are not sufficient to maximise the potential of our high performance players.

The Association therefore encourages players to seek out opportunities for themselves to train and compete abroad. By accessing quality training and competition abroad, players can improve their standard. This should raise the level of play at domestic events and will also enable Irish players to compete at a higher level in international competition.

The requirement to obtain permission to travel abroad for training or competition should not act as a barrier for high performance players, or be seen as suggesting that the Association is anything other than supportive. For this reason, the following process will be implemented for 2013/14 on a trial basis :

Outline:

- Subject to each qualifying player (when requested to do so) entering into a commitment with the ITTA to follow an agreed programme of training and competition, a 12 month permission will be granted to qualifying players (see below) permitting them to compete and train outside Ireland without having to seek permission on each occasion;
- A qualifying player should apply to the ITTA in September 2013 for a PP for 2013/14 season
- A PP holder would be required to notify the ITTA (not seek permission) when travelling abroad for training or competition during the 12 monthly period (valid from September to August of the following year)
- Players not holding a PP who wish to travel must apply for permission in the normal way (and which should not be unreasonably refused)
- A PP would not entitle the holder to automatic selection for foreign events that require selection by the ITTA

Qualifying Criteria for a Player Passport:

1. Underage Players:

- Any boy or girl ranked in the top five in their respective age group in the immediately preceding season
- Other underage players considered by the ITTA Board to be of sufficiently high standard and who demonstrate international potential (such players must apply to ITTA)
- PP would apply for senior and underage category events abroad

2. Senior Players (players who no longer qualify for Irish underage events on account of age):

- Any male or female player ranked in Top 8 in Ireland in the immediately preceding season
- Other players considered by the ITTA Board to be of sufficiently high standard (such players must apply to ITTA)

3. Professional Players:

Defined as either underage or senior players who:

- o Spend the majority of their time during the season playing or training abroad or
- o Not being in full-time education, earn their living from playing table tennis (and related commercial sponsorship activities) and this forms the majority of their earned income

No PP or other permission is required for any professional player as defined above.

4. Other Players:

Players who are not professional players (as defined above) but are contractually committed to play in foreign leagues (and who do not otherwise qualify for a Player Passport), may apply to the Association for a Player Passport to cover their travel to league matches abroad for the season.

As noted above, players who do not hold a PP (i.e. do not qualify under 1 – 4 above) and who wish to train and compete outside of Ireland, must apply for permission in the normal way (and which should not be unreasonably refused).

Other Related Matters:

- A Player Passport can be withdrawn for cases of proven misconduct at events abroad and/or can be refused for the following season for this reason. Where a PP is withdrawn that player can apply for permission to travel on an event by event basis.
- PP holders who are eligible for Irish Underage events shall be required to seek permission to travel if the foreign event clashes with an Irish Underage ranking event
- Branches, Clubs and others wishing to train and/or compete outside Ireland must apply on an event by event basis as at present

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